

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****United States Patent and Trademark Office**Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/435, 198 11/05/99 LAYNE

K 1148.002US1

TM02/0606

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EXAMINER

HESS, D

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2167

DATE MAILED:

06/06/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. <b>09/435,198</b>	Applicant(s) <b>Layne</b>
	Examiner <b>Douglas Hess</b>	Art Unit <b>2167</b>

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1)  Responsive to communication(s) filed on Nov 5, 1999

2a)  This action is FINAL.                    2b)  This action is non-final.

3)  Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4)  Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6)  Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.

7)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8)  Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9)  The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)  The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

11)  The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a)  approved b)  disapproved.

12)  The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

13)  Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

a)  All b)  Some\* c)  None of:

1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.

3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)  Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

#### Attachment(s)

15) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	18) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
16) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	19) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
17) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____	20) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Art Unit:

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371© of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

2. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Schutzer et al.

The Schutzer et al. system/network includes a Java applet and a common gateway interface script.

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 11-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schutzer et al.

Although Schutzer et al. disclose the same system and method as set out in claims 1-10, Schutzer et al. fail to explicitly define his data items as debt collection accounts and related

Art Unit:

attributes, it was known at the time that merely providing an automatic means to replace a manual activity which accomplishes the same result is not sufficient to distinguish over the prior art, *In re Venner*, 262 F.2d 91, 95, 120 USPQ 193, 194 (CCPA 1958). For example, simply automating or allowing clients to access certain accounts with limited or personally designed access to information that was previously accessible manually or by paper correspondence does not increase the value of the information being transacted, it merely performs the transaction with increased speed, whereby the end result is still the same. Furthermore the data claimed regarding the debt collection appears to be of the format of any type relational database.

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Doug Hess at telephone number (703) 308-3428.

Hess  
June 4, 2001

*Douglas Hess*  
DOUGLAS HESS  
PRIMARY EXAMINER

6-4-01